Dementia Screening

Information for Patients and Families

University Hospitals of Leicester
NHS Trust
Caring at its best
Introduction

Here at University Hospitals of Leicester we screen patients for dementia. This leaflet explains what the screening process involves.

What is Dementia?

The term ‘dementia’ describes a set of symptoms which include loss of memory, mood changes, and problems with communication and reasoning. These symptoms occur when the brain is damaged by certain diseases, including Alzheimer’s disease, and when damage is caused by a series of small strokes.

What is Dementia Screening?

If you are aged 75 and over and are admitted to our hospitals in an emergency, a doctor will screen you to check for the early signs of dementia. This does not mean that you or your relative has dementia but it is important that any early signs and symptoms are recognised.

A timely diagnosis can greatly improve the quality of life for the person with dementia and can offer support to carers and families.

Early diagnosis enables a person with dementia and their family to receive help in understanding and adjusting to the diagnosis and to prepare for the future in an appropriate way. This might include making legal and financial arrangements, changes to living arrangements and finding out about aids and services that will enhance quality of life for people with dementia and their family, friends and carers.

Early diagnosis can allow the individual to have an active role in decision making and planning for the future, while families can educate themselves about the disease and learn effective ways of interacting with the person with dementia.

Admission to hospital gives an opportunity to assess a person and ensure they have the appropriate care when they are discharged.
What does Dementia Screening Involve?

Step 1
When you are admitted to hospital the doctor will ask you or your family, friend or carer the following question:

“Has the person been more forgetful in the last 12 months, to the extent that it has significantly affected their daily life?”

Step 2
If the answer to this question is yes then the doctor will carry out an assessment:

• Cognitive tests – The doctor will ask a series of questions designed to test thinking and memory

• Physical examination and tests – The doctor will normally carry out a physical examination and may perform a number of tests, such as blood and urine tests, to identify other conditions that may be causing the symptoms

• Analysis of background information – The doctor may talk to you or your family, friend or carer, to try to establish some of the symptoms.

Step 3
If the assessment shows a possibility of dementia you will be asked to see your GP to discuss this further. The hospital doctor will inform your GP in your discharge letter. The GP may then refer you on to a memory clinic or a community liaison team for a formal diagnosis and support.

If you have any questions about Dementia Screening, please speak to a member of staff.
Sources of Information and Support

**Alzheimer’s Society** Offers a wide range of services and information about living with dementia.
www.alzheimers.org.uk

Alzheimer’s Society provides a Hospital Dementia Support Service within Leicester Hospital to provide additional support for people living with dementia and their carers.

For more information call the team on:
0116 231 6925 / 0116 258 7519

Alzheimer’s Society National Helpline: 0300 222 11 22

**Age UK**

Leicestershire and Rutland offers a free, confidential and independent information and advice service which can assist with the following issues:- welfare benefits (such as attendance allowance), money matters, leisure and social activities, social care, residential and nursing care and local services.

Visit the Age UK resource Centre, level 0, Windsor Building, Leicester Royal Infirmary

Telephone 0800 169 2081 or visit the website: www.ageuk.org.uk
If you have any questions, write them down here to remind you what to ask when you speak to your nurse/consultant.
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Today's research is tomorrow's care

We all benefit from research. Leicester's Hospitals is a research active Trust so you may find that research is happening when you visit the hospital or your clinic.

If you are interested in finding out how you can become involved in a clinical trial or to find out more about taking part in research, please speak to your clinician or GP.

If you would like this information in another language or format, please contact the service equality manager on 0116 250 2959

إذا كنت ترغب في الحصول على هذه المعلومات في شكل أو لغة أخرى، يرجى الاتصال مع مدير الخدمة للمساواة في 0116 250 2959.

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